

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1                    1.     A crate for bottles comprising:  
 2                    a floor member; and  
 3                    first and second pairs of opposed sidewalls integrally formed with the  
 4 floor member, each sidewall including a side band member defined by an upper edge  
 5 and lower edge, the lower edge spaced above the floor member by a predetermined  
 6 distance to define a sidewall nesting area therebelow, the upper and lower edges each  
 7 having a contour directed downwardly to form a corner band portion having a  
 8 corner upper edge and corner lower edge, wherein each nesting area matingly  
 9 receives a corresponding side band member of a crate nested subjacent thereto.

1                    2.     The crate of claim 1 wherein the contour is directed  
 2 downwardly in the plane of its respective sidewall.

1                    3.     The crate of claim 1, wherein each sidewall further includes a  
 2 plurality of projection members extending upwardly from the upper edges of each  
 3 band member and received within corresponding openings formed in the lower edge  
 4 when nested below a similar crate.

1                    4.     The crate of claim 1, further comprising a corner projection  
 2 member extending upward from a corner upper surface and received within a  
 3 corresponding corner opening formed in a corner lower surface when nested below  
 4 a similar crate.

1                    5.     The crate of claim 4, wherein the upper surface of the sidewall  
 2 projections and corner wall projections are substantially co-planar.

1                    6.     The crate of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and  
 2 second pairs of opposed sidewalls includes a pair of diagonally opposed members  
 3 extending upwardly therefrom for preventing crate misuse.

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1                   7.    The crate of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second  
2 pairs of opposed sidewalls includes an opening for providing visibility into the crate.

1                   8.    The crate of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second  
2 pairs of opposed sidewalls includes a handle member for handling the crate.

1                   9.    The crate of claim 1, wherein the first and second pairs of  
2 opposed sidewalls have a double-wall construction.

1                   10.   The crate of claim 1, wherein the first and second pairs of  
2 opposed sidewalls have an outer portion defined by the band member, and an inner  
3 surface integrally attached to the floor member.

1                   11.   The crate of claim 1, wherein the upper and lower edges have  
2 a wave-like contour.

1                   12.   A crate for bottles comprising:  
2                   a base; and  
3                   a sidewall structure extending upwardly from the base and attached  
4 thereto, the sidewall structure including a continuous band member having a pair of  
5 opposed side band portions, a pair of opposed end band portions, and corner band  
6 portions disposed between each adjacent side band portion and end band portion, the  
7 band member defined by an upper edge and lower edge, wherein the lower edge at  
8 the side band portions and end band portions is spaced above the base a  
9 predetermined distance to define a corresponding nesting area therebelow for  
10 receiving the corresponding side band portion and end band portion when in a  
11 nesting orientation with a similar crate, the upper edge at the side band portions and  
12 end band portions being directed downwardly such that the upper edge at the corner  
13 band portion is disposed below the plane of the upper edge at the side band portions  
14 and end band portions in order to define a corner pocket above the corner portion  
15 upper edge.



8 the upper and lower edges directed downwardly in the plane of its respective sidewall  
9 to form with an adjacent end band member a corner band portion therebetween,  
10 wherein each side band member is matingly received within a corresponding nesting  
11 area; and

12 a corner projection member extending upward from the corner band  
13 portion and received within a corresponding opening formed in a corner lower  
14 surface when nested below a similar crate.

1 21. The crate of claim 20, wherein each sidewall further includes  
2 a plurality of projection members extending upwardly from the upper edges of the  
3 band member and received within corresponding openings formed in the lower edge  
4 when nested below a similar crate.

1 22. The crate of claim 21, wherein the upper surface of the sidewall  
2 projections and corner projections are substantially co-planar.

1 23. The crate of claim 20, wherein at least one of the end walls and  
2 sidewalls includes an opening for providing visibility into the crate.

1 24. The crate of claim 20, wherein the end walls includes a handle  
2 member for handling the crate.

1 <sup>24</sup>  
~~25~~ 25. The crate of claim 20, wherein the second pairs of opposed  
2 sidewalls have a double-wall construction.

1 <sup>25</sup>  
~~26~~ 26. The crate of claim 20, wherein the side walls and end walls  
2 have an outer portion defined by a respective band member, and an inner surface  
3 integrally attached to the floor member.

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